In the Claims:

Please amend Claims 1 and 28 as follows so that the complete of pending claims reads as follows:

1. (Currently amended) A method for selecting a modulator of a gonadal cell migration activity in a nematode having a developing gonadal cell, the nematode being selected from the group consisting of *C. elegans* and *C. briggsae*, the migration activity being selected from the group consisting of elongation and expansion, wherein the migration activity ~~can be~~ is regulated by a protein that comprises a metalloprotease domain and a thrombospondin domain, the method comprising the steps of:

treating a nematode with at least one potential modulator thereby producing a treated nematode; and

observing in the treated nematode a change in the migration activity of the cell attributable to the at least one potential modulator, wherein the change is not observed after treatment with the potential modulator of a mutant of the nematode that comprises the cell but does not comprise the protein, wherein the change results in the selection of the modulator,

wherein the protein is selected from the group consisting of a protein having an amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO:2, a protein encoded by a heterologous polynucleotide sequence of SEQ ID NO:1 introduced under transcriptional control of a promoter functional in the nematode, a chimeric protein that retains a metalloprotease domain and at least one thrombospondin domain of SEQ ID NO:2, murine ADAMTS-1 protein, bovine procollagen-1 N-proteinase, and human aggrecan-degrading metalloprotease.

2. (Previously amended) A method as claimed in Claim 1 wherein before the treating step the migration activity is absent or reduced relative to a wild type individual.

3. (Previously amended) A method as claimed in Claim 1 wherein the treating step restores or enhances the migration activity.

4. (Previously amended) A method as claimed in Claim 1 wherein before the treating step the migration activity is at a level of a wild type individual.

5. (Previously amended) A method as claimed in Claim 1 wherein the treating step reduces the migration activity.

6. – 10. (Cancelled)

13. (Previously amended) A method as claimed in Claim 1 wherein the at least one modulator is selected from the group consisting of a nucleic acid molecule, a protein molecule, a sugar, a lipid, an organic molecule, a synthetic or natural pharmaceutical agent, and a mixture thereof.

14. – 27. (Cancelled)

28. (Currently amended) A method as claimed in Claim 1 wherein before the treating step ~~the migration activity is not regulated by~~ the protein is non-functional.

29. (Previously amended) A method as claimed in Claim 28 wherein the modulator is a nucleic acid molecule that encodes the protein.

30. (Previously amended) A method as claimed in Claim 28 wherein the modulator is the protein.

REMARKS

In an Office Action mailed December 17, 2002, the Examiner imposed final rejections of pending Claims 1-10, 13 and 16. In an Amendment After Final Rejection mailed on June 16, 2003, the applicants amended Claims 1-6 and 10 and added new Claims 28-30. In an Advisory Action mailed July 11, 2003, the Examiner advised the applicants that the proposed amendment would not be entered, and asked the applicants to discuss proposed amendments with the Examiner.

On July 29, 2003, the Examiner conducted a telephonic interview with the applicants' undersigned representative, discussing amendments to bring Claims 1 and 28 and their dependents into condition for allowance. The Examiner accurately summarized the interview in an Interview Summary mailed August 5, 2003. Applicants thank the Examiner for his careful attention to this matter.

The amendments presented above incorporate the changes to Claims 1 and 28 discussed in the interview and all pending claims are now believed to be in condition for allowance. As the Examiner noted, amended Claim 1 reflects that the migration activity is regulated by a protein that comprises a metalloprotease domain and a thrombospondin domain. In the interview, applicants pointed out, and the Examiner acknowledged, that while the protein regulates the migration activity, neither the migration activity nor the protein need be present before treating a nematode with at least one potential modulator, as claimed. Notably, Claim 2 recites that the migration activity is absent or reduced before the treating step and Claim 28 (as amended) recites that the protein is non-functional before the treating step. Claims 3, 29 and 30, not amended in this response, concern the scenarios in which the treating step restores migration activity or provides a suitable migration activity-changing protein to the nematode in the treating step.

As noted, the prior Amendment After Final Rejection was not entered. The Examiner advised that both the prior response and this response would be entered upon filing of this submission such that the pending claims would reflect all amendments proposed by the applicants. Accordingly, the applicants hereby request entry of both the amendment filed on June 16, 2003 as well as this supplemental amendment. Reconsideration of the merits of this patent application and the issuance of a notice of allowance are respectfully requested.

This supplemental response is being submitted within two months of the mailing date of a Notice of Appeal in this case. Accordingly, no fee or extension of time is believed due. However, should any fee be due, please consider this to be a request to charge the fee to Deposit Account No. 17-0055. Likewise, should any extension of time be due, please

consider this to be a request for the appropriate extension of time and a request to charge the fee for the extension of time to the same deposit account.

If anything further is required of the applicants, the Examiner is asked to telephone the undersigned directly for prompt resolution.

Respectfully submitted,

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